

Duplication in fire halls, councillor argues

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draw a maximum of 200 people, minor hockey president Mike Humphreys said.

He advocates using the current arena on Ninth Line for larger events.

The 335 seats are up from earlier plans which showed seating of 300 for each NHL-sized rink. With standing room, seating in the lobby and a rail to lean on, about 500 spectators could be accommodated for each ice surface in the new building.

The arena would feature a metal siding and glass exterior with a canopy overhanging the entrance. The lobby would be about two feet higher than the ice surface allowing for a good view onto the rinks.

User group requests have not been included in the current plans, Mr. Humphreys said.

In addition to fewer seats, he's looking for more equipment storage space as well as a training area for athletes. It should be large enough to have space for group workouts and training equipment.

All skaters and hockey players have to warm up before going on the ice, he said.

When the idea of turning one of the ground-floor dressing rooms into a workout room was put before the town's ice user groups, most wanted it kept as a dressing room, Tom Graham, director of leisure services, said.

The fire service has to be able to send 10 firefighters to a fire scene within 10 minutes.

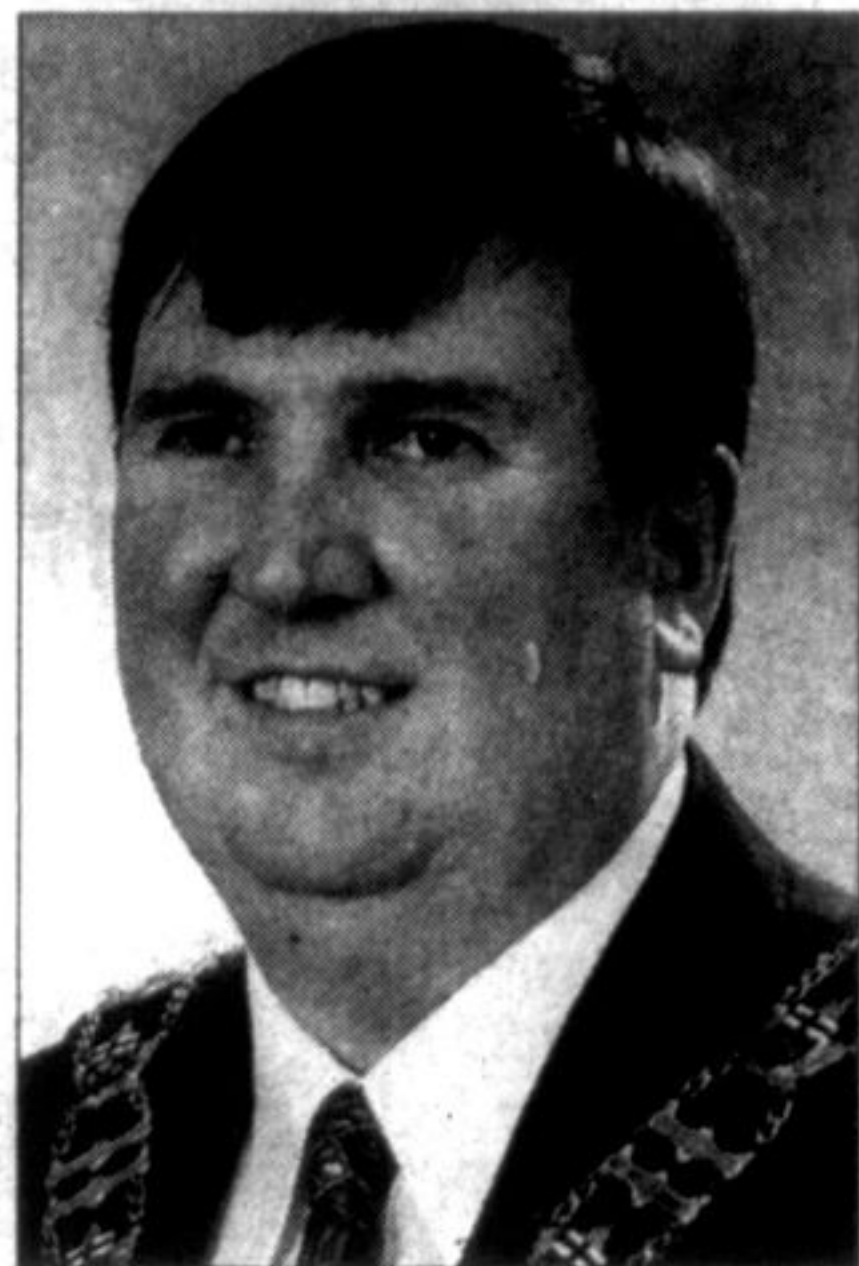
The new fire hall would burden taxpayers unnecessarily with costs of offices and rooms that are already in the Ballantrae fire hall, Mr. Bannon said.

Councillor Clyde Smith pushed for making the buildings 'green' up to standards set under the LEED program (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), which York Region has adopted.

The consultants at the meeting were from Thomas Brown Architects, who focused on the fire hall construction, and Shore Tilbe Irwin & Partners. They noted that many environmental features are already included in the plans.

The fire hall, which was originally to be a two-storey structure, now has one floor of 16,630 square feet plus 2,100 square feet for emergency and medical services staff.

The exterior would be of



WAYNE EMMERSON: Mayor unsure when arena and fire hall plans will return to council.

red brick, reflecting a heritage look. There would be a tower housing the fire bell from the original Whitchurch fire station, which no longer exists.

However, what is inside the building has Mr. Bannon worried. The offices for the fire prevention officer, fire inspection officer, training room, classroom, emergency operations and other functions are already in the Ballantrae hall, which was built as a headquarters building, he said.

He maintained that the new Stouffville station didn't need to be a headquarters and wanted to see the rooms deleted from the plans.

He was also concerned about building another large hall if the fire service ever amalgamated with Central York Fire Services.

The Newmarket and Aurora department now serves the northwest part of the municipality.

The fire service has to be able to send 10 firefighters to a fire scene within 10 minutes, Fire Chief Chris Powers responded.

Because the community of Stouffville is on the east side of the region, "If you can't do it from Stouffville, he said, "you can't do it from other stations."

If you don't have facilities and services that support higher level services, there will be reduced safety to the public and it will affect insurance rates, Mr. Powers said.

Town CAO Dave Cash cautioned that if rooms had to be added later they wouldn't necessarily be paid for by development charges.

Construction expenses would likely be higher for an addition, the consultant said.

Doing the project now will be a benefit to the taxpayer, Mr. Emmerson said.

Other councillors raised their own doubt.

Councillor Susanne Hilton made the motion to defer the project until staff could let council know the implications of making changes.

A clearly frustrated Mr. Emmerson said, "I don't know when this is coming back (to council)."

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